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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 USNATO 000520

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/12/2019

TAGS: PREL PGOV NATO MARR MASS BK

SUBJECT: HIGHREP INZKO PRESSES NATO ON MAP FOR BIH

Classified By: A/Political Advisor A. "Hoot" Baez. Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶11. (C) Summary: High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) Inzko briefed the NAC on November 11. Inzko, supported by Ambassador Daalder and many other PermReps, provided a negative assessment of the situation in BiH and stressed the need to support the U.S.-EU "Butmir process." Inzko counseled the NAC to grant a Membership Action Plan (MAP) to BiH at the December Foreign Ministerial but subsequent discussion by PermReps demonstrated that there was no consensus to do so. Ambassador Daalder said the U.S. would support MAP for BiH only when it had the necessary state structures in place, stressing that this was necessary for MAP to work. Inzko said the Peace Implementation Council on November 18 was unlikely to agree OHR-EUSR transition. He said EUFOR should retain its executive mandate and called on NATO to maintain a physical presence in BiH. End Summary.

BIH REQUIRES INTERNATIONAL ENGAGEMENT

¶12. (C) NATO Secretary General Rasmussen opened a Council session with High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) Inzko on November 11 by expressing alarm at the political situation in BiH and noting that the country must have effective state institutions in order to further its Euro-Atlantic aspirations. HighRep Inzko provided a negative assessment of the situation in BiH, particularly with regard to obstructionism by Bosnian Serb PM Dodik.

¶13. (C) Inzko expressed support for the U.S.-EU "Butmir process" but noted that the fact that the U.S. and EU had to step in demonstrated the continuing need for international engagement. He said that, without such engagement, there would be serious negative consequences in the mid- to long-term. Ambassador Daalder said the U.S. shared Inzko's pessimism and determination to get BiH right, and would continue to work with the EU on the Butmir process.

OHR PRESSES FOR MAP IN DECEMBER

¶14. (C) HighRep Inzko counseled the NAC to grant a Membership

Action Plan (MAP) to BiH at the December Foreign Ministerial.

Inzko said granting MAP would help stabilize BiH and strengthen pro-integration forces. Ambassador Daalder responded that without implementation of the Butmir package, MAP would not be BiH's salvation. He emphasized that the U.S. would support MAP for BiH when it had the necessary state structures in place to successfully use MAP. Referring to the EU decision to deny BiH entry into the EU's Visa Waiver program and the response that elicited, Daalder questioned whether MAP in December might not be better used as a stick than a carrot. Germany supported U.S. comments, noting the disconnect between Inzko's negative assessment of progress in BiH and his call for early MAP.

¶15. (C) Albania, Croatia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey expressed at least tentative support for the idea of granting MAP in December, while Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and the UK expressed skepticism. The Netherlands said BiH was not ready for MAP, and the UK and Belgium stressed the need to preserve the credibility of the MAP process. Romania made a similar point, noting that MAP implied performance and that we "need to be true to ourselves." Romania also pointed out that MAP can only be offered once to a country, implying that once MAP was granted the Alliance would lose its ability to use MAP as an incentive for further reforms. France summed up the discussion by saying there was no consensus to grant MAP in December, but there was consensus on the need to encourage BiH.

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¶16. (C) Inzko, visibly irritated, responded that MAP was not the same as full NATO membership and stressed the positive benefits of granting MAP. He expressed concern that, without MAP, Bosnian elites would be frustrated and disappointed and cautioned that NATO should not delay too long because this would strengthen nationalist forces in BiH. In response to queries on Belgrade's and Moscow's probable response to MAP for BiH, Inzko said he felt Serbia would be supportive but Russia would not.

OHR-EUSR TRANSITION NOT LIKELY IN 2009

¶17. (C) HighRep Inzko assessed transition from the Office of the High Representative (OHR) to the EU Special Representative (EUSR) would likely not be possible at the Peace Implementation Council (PIC) meeting on November 18 due to a lack of progress by BiH in meeting the 52 conditions, particularly in the areas of state and defense property. He said the transition may be possible at the next PIC meeting in February or March 2010. Croatia, the Netherlands, and Portugal expressed support for maintaining OHR at present, although Greece said that imposing decisions on the Bosnians causes political problems.

EUFOR NEEDS TO MAINTAIN EXECUTIVE MANDATE

¶18. (C) Inzko said he understood the force generation problems the EU is facing in manning EUFOR in BiH, but stressed the continuing need for EUFOR to ensure a safe and secure environment. Inzko, supported by the Netherlands, stated that EUFOR needed to retain its executive mandate and the ability to deploy quickly throughout Bosnian territory. Greece and Portugal emphasized the importance of maintaining both an EU and NATO political-military presence in BiH.

NATO PRESENCE IN BIH IS ESSENTIAL

¶19. (C) Inzko recommended that NATO continue to maintain a

physical presence in BiH, saying NATO's footprint need not be large but should remain until Bosnia achieves NATO membership. He said the NATO presence is an important confidence building measure for the peace process and is necessary to facilitate and encourage BiH's Euro-Atlantic integration.

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